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T. FANNING, EDITOR.

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ELEMENTARY STUDIES.—NO. 5.

HAVING given sufficient attention to matters introductory to the Elements of religion, we deem it proper to introduce to our readers, what the intelligent in all time, have admitted, as the "Beginning corner." To persons acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, we scarcely need intimate that, the first and chief Element in the Divine economy is,

FAITH.

"Having given all diligence to write to you in reference to our common salvation and life, there was need to write to you, exhorting to earnestly defend the faith, once given to the saints."—Jude i: 3.

We gravely inquire, Why is faith the first and great requirement in the new covenant?

"Without faith," says an inspired apostle, "it is impossible to please God." Again he says, "He that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek him."—Heb. xi: 6. But Paul completes the argument by asserting that, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin."—Rom. xiv: 23 If, then, God cannot be pleased without faith, if he that comes to the Father *must* believe in him, and finally, if any one sins in attempting a religious performance without faith. it would seem impossible to acceptably perform the slightest service before faith. We may be told that, some were commanded by the Savior to

"Repent and believe the gospel," and that repentance is before faith. It is true, Jesus said to the Jews who trusted in the God of Israel, "Repent and believe the gospel," and to that class of the human family, repentance was the necessary condition, to enable them to trust in the Savior. Their faith in God was undoubted, but they had wantonly forsaken the law and the prophets, and nothing short of a change of life could place them in position to believe the gospel. The same is still applicable to the family of Abraham, who believe in God, but despise our Redeemer. Unless they bitterly repent of their departure from the law, they cannot trust in the gospel of the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

Paul, in speaking to the seniors of Ephesus of his teaching, without reference to the order of the distinctive items which he had set forth, said that he had "testified to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts xx: 21. In this passage no scholar or thinking, man can find the least authority for a rule that, would necessarily place repentance before faith. As evidence that inspired writers did not always regard the order in which they placed matters of equal value, we quote such passages as, "And have omitted judgment, mercy and faith." Matt. xxiii: 23. Mercy, in fact, always follows faith, but here, good taste placed mercy before faith. Again, "Barnabas was a good man, full of faith." Acts xi: 24. We ask whether faith is the forerunner of goodness in fact, or must confidence in God always antedate goodness and a pure life? Faith in God, in the very nature of things, precedes all moral acquisitions. But to the Jews, who had faith in God, Jesus said, "I, indeed, baptize you in water (*eis*) in order to repentance." Matt. iii: 2. This is simply saying to the sons of Abraham, I preach to you the baptism of reformation in order to the remission of sins. The preposition *eis*, which in such passages means *in order to*, is here used; and when the purpose of an act is expressed by *eis*, it should be *for*, or *in order to*. When men, however, suppose that because the Jews were commanded to "Repent and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance," before trusting the Messiah that, the Gentiles who are "without hope and without God" *must*, or *can*, repent before faith in the Omnipotent is produced in their breasts by Divine light, they are greatly mistaken with reference to elementary teaching.

Confidence in God, or faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, is the

main-spring to every religions emotion or act performed by men. The idea of requiring a fellow creature to repent towards a God in whom there is no faith, no confidence, no trust, is simply impossible, and what never occurred, and never can take place.

We are the more careful and more elaborate on this point, from the fact that many teachers, from what we consider a very mistaken view, are disposed to place reformation of life before the faith, which prompts men to come to God, and through which worth is given to religious life. Hence, we repeat that "without faith, it is impossible to please God." "He that comes to him must not only believe that he is, but that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Esau, when he sold his birthright, repented bitterly—bewailed himself anxiously—but because there was no ground for believing the decree of his father could be revoked, his bitterness of soul availed nothing. Judas Iscariot, who committed the unpardonable sin, in the betrayal of his Master, deeply regretted his conduct, and threw down his dishonest gain, but as he was beyond the reach of faith, it availed not. The twelve found at Ephesus, who no doubt had been baptized by Apollos, in ignorance of the truth, for want of an intelligent faith, were unprofited by their ignorantly performed service, and when Paul led them by the truth into the belief in Christ, they were prepared to put him on understandingly, and to rejoice through faith.

With these very brief statements, we consider the evidence ample to satisfy earnest inquirers that, faith universally antedates every other religious obligation; and is not only the cause of every good impulse of the human heart, but also that all acts performed without it are worse than useless. In the language of inspiration, acts without faith are not only sinful, but are highly offensive to God and dishonoring to man. Faith sanctifies and consecrates every ordinance, and gives all the real value to every religious performance of life. The repentance or baptism springing from the true faith of the Gospel, is acceptable to God, and of infinite value to the believer; but without it, all is imaginary service, and is but sheer mockery and a degredation to our race.

WHAT IS FAITH?

We have so frequently, in examining the various topics to which we have called attention, referred to faith, in contrast with opinions and demonstrations, or mathematical knowledge, that we suppose the more advanced readers sufficiently understand our defini-

tion of the subject ;but possibly , others see not clearly its import, and therefore we think it best to submit our conclusions in as formal a manner as the scriptures will allow.

Paul tells us that "Faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the evidence, of things not seen." Heb. i: 1. In this statement of inspiration, we think, our purposes can be best subserved by treating the latter part—"the evidence of things not seen"—first.

It will be remembered that opinions are mere impressions, which flit across the mind or float in the brain, without any positive information. That the heavenly bodies may be inhabited by giants, or pigmies, is a mere fancy, for which there is not the shadow of authority, and therefore, it can never be dignified as belief. Lawyers seem often discriminating in reference to opinions, and yet we think we have often discovered instances in which venerable judges on the bench, have failed to perceive the true ground of hearsay or opinion. We will be allowed to repeat that there is no information, no light, no evidence in opinions, and therefore, they should be rejected in matters of importance as fabulous and injurious.

Dreams may be classed as opinions, but in the case of Jacob's vision of the ladder, upon which the angels of God ascended and descended, there was full and clear information given by the Almighty, who stood above it and said, "I am the Lord God of thy father, and the land wherein thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This was direct revelation to the man of God, given in words, and yet he was so confident of the truth of what he heard that he called the place Bethel—the house of God—and he set up a monumental stone as a pillar,which he said "shall be God's house," and exclaimed, "How fearful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Gen. xxviii: 10–20. Dreams, in the style of Solomon, which "Come through the multitude of business," are mere impressions left on the brain, when sleep shuts out the world, and which are never coherent, and reveal nothing; whereas, when God made revelations in visions, he *spoke* words which were retained, and their fulfillment always verified the truth. Hence, uninspired dreams are mere fancy, contain no light, and are but unreliable opinions, which may be told, in the style of Jeremiah, in the absence of what is reliable, merely as dreams, but he that has the word of the Lord, is to speak it faithfully.

We have no demonstrable evidence that Napolean the First lived, but we have *heard* it, and through hearing we have acquired information which amounts to reliable evidence, and proves faith. Hence, we conclude that light and information come to us often by hearsay, that what we have heard upon sufficient authority, is really trustworthy; and we believe, because the assurance of truth cannot be resisted. The Apostle, in affirming that, "Faith is the evidence of things not seen," took in at one grasp the whole light of the universe as reported to him. We believe through what we have heard that the first man was made of clay, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul; and the evidence is so well authenticated that we doubt not its truth.

We have the assurance that there is a Maker of the heavens and the earth, in whom we live, move, and have our being; and this assurance, or faith, is but the evidence of what we have not seen. What we have read and heard is of so convincing a character that we cannot hesitate as to its truth. In like manner, we believe in angels, in a future life, and in endless happiness, simply because the report has reached us in a shape that satisfies us it is unquestionably true.

With these statements, we consider that we are better prepared to feel the force of Paul's language, "Faith is the confidence o things hoped for." It is said, "Hope is composed of expectation and desire;" and we are assured that expectation is created by light, by promise; and when these exist, desire is living and anxious to rule. But both the confident assurance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, rest solely upon revelations made in words. Hence, faith does not look back, but always forward, longs for what is good, and anticipates, to the extent of what is promised,—no further.

HOW DOES FAITH COME?

If we understand well the definition of faith given by Paul, it would seem almost a work of supererrogation to offer an answer to the above question. But the same writer, to place us without excuse, formerly states that "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. x: 17.

The truth of this proposition involves the truth of all philoso

phy and imaginary discoveries, through what speculatists denominate the moral sense, "our religious nature," spiritual consciousness, etc.

Not intending, at present, to enter into further discussion of the *a priori*, or *a posteriori*, dogma of the schools, regarding the sources of spiritual light, and its modes of manifestation, or to give even a passing notice to that sickly sentimentalism which frequently manifests itself in dreamy philosophers, who fancy that their feelings are quite sufficient to supply all needed light and direction in religion, we will ever rejoice and thank God that he has so loved our race as to reveal himself and his ways to the suffering of earth, through light bearing words, delivered to the fathers by the prophets, but to us by the Holy Spirit in the hearts and on the tougues of the apostles, and holy men who spoke as the Spirit gave them *utterance*. No other view of the origin and power of faith has ever been able to satisfy the human soul, and lift our hopes to God and heaven.

It was under the influence of this divine arrangement that Jesus commissioned the disciples to "Go and teach the nations—Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," said the beloved redeemer. By carrying out the divine purposes, about three thousand rejoiced in the faith, through the gladdening word on Pentecost, five thousand leaped for joy at hearing Peter's discourse from Solomon's porch, and multiplied thousands in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, were quickened into life by hearing the glad tidings from the lips of the humble disciples of Christ. The Gentiles also, were converted and saved through the faith preached. Hence, Peter informs us that, "God made choice that by his mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe." Acts xv: 7.

But the time would fail us to tell of the conversion of the nations through the preached Gospel, or to give the one-thousandth part of the evidence which exists that all the faith of a lost world has been, and must necessarily be, through the living words of the Spirit, written by the finger of God in the Bible. This, too, is the argument which should ever be pressed upon the hearts of Christians, to lead them to "sound out" the truth in order that all may see the glorious light of God, and be led to trust him through his word. It is the mission of Christians to save themselves, in saving others.

DOES FAITH PROMISE ETERNAL LIFE?

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." John iii: 15.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should have everlasting life." John iii: 16.

These scriptures require no expositor. They plainly teach that eternal life is conditional upon full trust in the Savior. We have already seen that faith in Jesus Christ is the first requirement of the Gospel, and secondly, that it is the ever living principle in the soul, which prompts and sanctifies every other act. Hence, we read in the Scriptures of "The obedience of faith," or that acceptable obedience which springs from the obedient heart. Faith dies, and is called dead, when it leads not to obedience. James says, "Faith without works, is dead." Felix, the governor, and King Agrippa, both possessed short lived faith. The seed was sown on stony ground, without depth of soil, but the matter not being well understood, and the devil having offered the temptation of office, wealth and honor. they lost all that was sown in their hearts. But we may be asked, if there is not such a thing as faith *alone*, without its continuance, and without the obedience of faith, that saves the soul? Not at all. Faith that produces no fruit, soon dies, and satan takes possession. Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, seemed to favor the idea of salvation by faith alone. Mr. Wesley, who seems to have credit for the creed of the Methodist people, says in the ninth article. "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith *only*, is a wholesome doctrine and full of comfort." It is likely these distinguished teachers, men fighting against the traditions of Rome, which had long been preached as the essentials of religion, when at a single bound they intended to escape from their entangled meshes, and establish the teaching of salvation by faith. Although their language often favors the dangerous supposition of spiritual blessings promised through faith, without submission to Christ, we doubt whether they were really under the influence of so fatal an error. Teachers of the denominations generally, preach in word, "faith alone," in order to salvation, but their hard labor to induce their converts to commit themselves by overt acts, leads us to doubt if they really believe what they seem to teach. Many of the "faith alone" teachers act still more inconsistently in main-

taining that, what they call, "regeneration," does not really depend upon even the mental exertion denominated faith, but upon a direct operation of the spirit, not through hearing, but upon the naked heart, before faith, and in order to beget faith. Still there seem to be reasons for doubt, whether they understand themselves, or are guilty of so monstrous incongruities, as we sometimes attribute to them.

Faith being the leading, moving, and living power, which turns the sinner from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God, our Lord said, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii: 36. This is clearly asserting that where faith exists, there is spiritual life; and where there is no living, moving, working faith, there is no life of God in the soul. This passage has no direct reference to becoming a Christian; but is intended to assert the truth of the idea that when faith lives not, the soul is dead to God.

WHAT IS THE TRUE THOUGHT IN THE WORDS "JUSTIFIED BY FAITH?"

Paul says, in referring to the fact, the Lord Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. iv: 25 and v: 1. In examining this point, it would be well to ascertain first, the meaning of *justification.* Does it always, or ever, necessarily denote pardon of sins? Does it ever denote that passage from the kingdom of satan into the kingdom of Christ, known as the new birth? The Greek noun *Dikaiosunee*, occurs ninety-three times in the New Testament, and is translated in our version, *Righteousness;* but in no passage is the idea of pardon, forgiveness of sins, or the new birth contained. It merely denotes *right doing*, or *approval.* The Savior says, "It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," or to approve every righteous appointment. The adjective, *Dikaios*, is found eighty times in the New Testament, and is rendered *right*, *righteous*, and *just*, seventy-eight times, and *meet* twice. The verb *Dikaioo* is found forty times, and is rendered *justified* or *justify* twenty-nine times, and "Let him be *righteous*" once; but in our judgment contains not the idea of *pardon*, or translation from the dominion of the devil into the kingdom of God, in a single instance. It means to *approve*, or acknowledge *right*, just, *right-*

eous, etc. Hence, the Lord said, "Wisdom is *justified* of her children," Matt. xi: 19. By thy words, thou shalt be *justified*, and so of all the rest. We are said to be approved or justified.

1. By our words. Matt. xii: 37.

2. The publicans justified God, being baptized by John. Luke vii: 29.

3. Men justify themselves. Luke xvi: 15.

4. Christ justifies believers. Acts xiii: 39 and Gal, ii: 17.

5. The doers of the law shall be justified. Rom. ii: 13.

6. We are fully justified by his grace. Rom. iii: 35.

7. Justified by faith, or from faith. Rom. iii: 28, v: 1.

8. We are justified by his blood. Rom. v: 9.

9. The dead are said to be justified, or freed from sin. Rom. vi: 7.

10. We are said to be justified in, or by the name of Christ. 1st Cor. vi: 11.

11. God justified the heathen. Gal, iii: 8.

12. Christ was justified by the Spirit. 1st Tim. iii: 16.

13. Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works? Isa. ii: 21, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect, and the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, (justification.) Finally, James says, "You see, then, how that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." We cannot see how comments could make the subject of justification plainer. God approvss of men on various grounds; and it may be safely affirmed that in all right conduct the Heavenly Father justifies or approves of his erring children of earth. But we repeat, this is not the word employed by the Good Spirit to express the idea of remission of sins, or the new birth. If we are correct in this conclusion, it ought to be known by those who have so zealously labored to sustain the error of pardon through faith only, and such especially, as have been innocently led into the false theory;

WHAT IS THE DESIGN OF FAITH?

We are not sure that we can ever tell all the purposes of faith; but there is one thing most certain, viz: we can tell something which faith was never intended to accomplish. It was not intended to change the drunkard into a righteous man. Repentance alone cures drunkenness, and stops all the flood gates of vice of every description.

Faith, as we have said, was never intended as the condition of

forgiveness, but its purpose was to prepare the way for it, and hence, no one is commanded to believe for the remission of sins. We have heard many teachers of high repute attempt to prove that pardon is through faith, from the words, "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." Acts x: 43. A school child who cannot read grammatically the sentence, deserves either great pity or severe punishment, but when such an one as N. L. Rice, D.D., quotes the passage with the strong assurance that it teaches remission through faith, we should look at it with care. The Apostle asserts that believers shall receive the remission of sins through the name of Christ. He that hath ears, let him hear the words of the Spirit. Let him study their meaning, and observe all things commanded, and let him free himself from a system which is so corrupt that it finds not the slightest sanction in the New Testament. How do we receive remission *in*, or *through* the name of Christ? How? It is by virtue of names all property, real or personal, is held; and it is by names inheritances are conveyed. The wife becomes heir with her husband through his name. In the first covenant, all blessings were through the name of God. Hence it was said, "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee." Ex. xx: 24. But under the new covenant there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved than the name of Christ," Acts iv: 12.

There is really no intrinsic value in any of the ordinances—that is, there is no fitness, or power, in prayer or baptism to take away sin, but the power is in the *name* of him who gives the order. In, by, or through the name, or authority of Jesus Christ, all blessings are conferred in the Christian institution. In the conversion of Cornelius, after the miracle of the outpouring of the spirit, to convince the Jews, and the speaking with tongues, the command was, to be "baptized *in the name* of Jesus Christ." In this, Peter finished the commission to "tell Cornelius words by which he and all his house were to be saved." Acts xi: 14. The power to pardon was not through, or in the Spirit, but was in the name of Zion's King. The Gentiles submitted in faith of Christ and received "remission of sins" *through his name.* But it is more pleasant to consider the positive side of the question. We ask, then, what is the first change wrought in man in order to his salvation from sin? It is the "change of heart," a complete revolution of the feelings and desires of the soul. It is such a change

as enables the sinner to turn his thoughts from what is wicked, from the earth and things perishable, up to God and things divine. This is no imaginary change, but is real, sensible, and wonderful in our eyes to be able to give our hearts to our Creator. Has God revealed any specific condition, to work this great change? He has. What is it? Prayer? Nay. Is it baptism which changes the heart? Not at all. If this were the condition, no one would be held responsible. The spirit fell upon the disciples on Pentecost, but its direct contact never changed the heart of any one.

God has ordained faith, and we consider it not too strong to say, *faith alone*, as the specific requirement, which is in the power of all who can hear with understanding, in order to the change of heart, that is universally experienced by converts to the Lord, As a first example, we refer to the three thousand scoffers, whose hearts were so changed, broken and overwhelmed by the faith producing words of Peter on Pentecost that they cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" These are such as heard, understood, and from the depths of believing and feeling hearts. made the solemn inquiry. Peter told these believing Jews to "Repent," or renounce all sin, and submit to God, in the name of Christ, in order to the remission of sins. "As many as gladly received the word, were baptized," and rejoiced in keeping the ordinances of their Savior.

Peter said that "God made choice that by his mouth the Gentiles should hear the Gospel and believe." And put no difference between us (Jews) and them, (Gentiles) *purifying* their hearts by faith." Acts xv: 7–9. With this agree, the words of Paul, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth. confession is made unto salvation." Rom. x: 9–10. A better reading is, "With the heart men believe (*eis*) in order to righteousness, and with their mouth, confession is made (*eis*) in order to salvation."

Faith, we repeat, is the first operative element in the human soul to turn aliens from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God. It changes the heart from the love of sin to the love of righteousness; it quickens all the dead powers of the soul into life and activity, and leads the lost from the empire of death to the door of God's spiritual house. While faith alone cannot

transport from satan's empire into the empire of light, it leads to the gate and earnestly claims the right of entrance upon submission to the King.

THE UNITY OF FAITH.

Paul informs us that there is "One God and Father of all, one Lord, one faith." Eph. iv: 5–6. Are we to conclude that there is but one faith for all Christians? No doubt, this is what the Apostle intended. If it were true that all the saints are of the one faith, what disposition are we to make of the various creeds, called the faith of the different orders of the age? The creeds, though denominated the systems of faith of the respective parties adopting them, are mere speculative views or opinions, but rise not to anthority of faith. We doubt if the teachers in the various parties feel full confidence in any of the fancies required, and we see not how it is practicable for an earnest man to believe the articles of the creeds.

The same testsmony was furnished to all by the Spirit, and, as was predicted, all came to the unity of the faith in acquiring the perfect testimony near the close of the first century. This was when the testimony was closed, when the finishing lesson was given by the beloved John.

Romanism, Protestantism, Modern Spiritualism, and Universalism, are but speculations, and nothing can be of *the* faith which is not in the words of *the* faith. As to the truth of the Bible, God permits men to differ, but still, he who rejects the Divine record, does it at his own peril. But we have no right to differ with regard to the things written. Jesus prayed that "All might be one, as he and the Father were one, who should believe through the Apostles' words." John xvii: 20. We can see no room for differences amongst a people whose faith is bounded by the word of God. Calvinists and Armenians see eye to eye, and have the identical faith, when they see and believe through the words of eternal life contained in the Gospel. In fact, there can be no difference until one or the other disputant, ceases to be governed by the inspired oracles.

THE TRIUMPHS OF FAITH.

Faith leads us into Christ; through faith we are kept from sin and death while we travel the journey of life, and faith is our

only comfort in the dying hour. Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith." It is by faith we are enabled to look through death to immortality and eternal life. Hence, our faith is our greatest treasure in life, it is our only support in death, and through the dark shadow of the tomb it lights our pathway and gives us hope as to the future state.

ANCIENT AND MODERN CHURCHES—No. 2.

In our fourth number, we endeavored to give a scriptural statement in regard to "the Church at Jerusalem," or first congregation of the disciples of Christ, and we promised in the present issue, to show that at least some small progress has been made in modern times to occupy original ground. Inasmuch. however, as we design at no very distant day, should we be spared, to give as full and authoritative a history of the Church of the present as practicable, our purpose in these preliminary remarks is to furnish our readers a concise report of earnest efforts that have been made to restore to the church the ancient order of religious service, without the least effort to substantiate the truth of our assertions.

With the great religious movement of the times, we have been familiar from its incipiency; and we desire to give our understanding of the matter, in the hope that we may live to offer such authority regarding the truth of every position and practice, as shall prove convincing. We refer particularly to what is often called

"THE CURRENT REFORMATION."

In regard to the authors of the movement, it will be difficult to do justice to all the parties that have taken an active part. Thomas and Alexander Campbell, are generally considered the most efficient agents in the movement. We are in fact most cheerful in awarding to A. Campbell, more credit for what he has done than all others. It is true, that as early as in 1826, we became familiar with many of the most important details of "The Reformation," although we heard not of Thomas or Alexander Campbell, till 1828. In many sections of the West, the ostensible actors in the movement, were amongst a people called "Christians,"

who were perhaps under great obligations to the Brothers Campbell, but who at an early date appeared above the religious horizon, shoulder to shoulder with A. Campbell, especially in setting forth in a masterly manner, the following religious pleadings, viz:

1. Various learned and great men, particularly amongst the Presbyterians and Baptists, seemed to have lost all confidence in party religions and sectarian creeds. From our first acquaintance with these great men, they seemed to be perfectly satisfied that, Rome and her daughters, constituted the great apostacy predicted by Paul—that began the departure in the days of the Apostles, and accomplished the iniquity, when Church and State united under Constantine, in the first Athenasion creed, in the year 325. Some, it is true, entertained doubts, whether the Apostacy arrived at full maturity, before the state became subservient to *religious afficials*, early in the seventh century. The cause of primitive christianity, however was thought by many to be well nigh abandoned from the time the first human creed was made the test of religious faith. The church, under the figure of a "Woman," clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars—that brought forth a child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, and was caught up to God, and to his throne,"—was represented as "fleeing into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they shall feed her there, a thousand two hundred and three score days." From the date of the departure of the woman into the wilderness, which was likely as early as 325, but feint glimpses of the true church of God, have saluted the eyes of the most anxious. It is true, the Savior had said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her," but the wilderness sheltered her from an early age, and while "the earth is still helping the woman," it is confidently believed, the day is at hand, when she "shall look forth, as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." The aiders and abettors of "the Reformation," regarded, at the outset, all denominations from Rome, the crazy and haughty mother to her youngest daughter, as in deadly hostility to the "church of the first born whose names are written in heaven," and while we doubt not God had people in Babylon—the confusion of denominationalism, it was clear, they were exhorted, "To come out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins and that they receive not of her plagues." Multiplied thousands heard the warning voice, left the dark and bloody city, and planted them-

selves firmly upon the rock, with the Apostles ,and within the last fifty years, several hundred thousand of the best thinkers and most independent actors of earth, have solemnly covenanted to gether, to form no alliances with heresies, but to live together as christians, and members of the one heavenly family, which was originally planted at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. It has been our rejoicing that we were members of no party, sect, or denomination, but were really and truly members of the family of God. It has also been, and is still our conviction that, inasmuch as the church of Jesus Christ, has the promise of the Father's prediction, and has weathered the storm for eighteen hundred years, its triumphs will ultimately be certain. Regarding the creed of the church, the noble spirits that were employed as God's ministers in projecting this return from the precincts of Babylon to "Jerusalem, the free-woman and mother of us all," it may suffice to say, that they considered all efforts to make creeds capable of binding the hearts of the saints together, not only as sad mistakes, but also as a high offence against God.

They not only regarded them as wholy inadequate for the purposes contemplated, but, upon a closer examination, they satisfied themselves that, all human confessions, are but so many bundles of contractions and absurdities, entirely unsuited for the spiritually minded. From these negative conclusions, as to the ground of religious belief, they were led to conclude that "the Bible, and the Bible alone," in the words of the great Chillingworth, "is the religion of Protestants," or rather that the words of the Holy Spirit, in the forms written in the New Testament, constitute the only creed of Christians. We may be told that, "the scriptures require explanations, interpretations,, to adapt them to the minds of the common people." We reply that God gave His word, not to expounders, or learned interpreters to dole out morsels to a perishing world, but directly to his people as perfectly adapted to all their exigencies. The Scriptures of the New Testament, are in fact, the "Last will and Testament of our Lord," and we are required to believe them, as they were written. Jesus prayed that "All who should believe on him through the words of the Apostles, might be one, as he and the Father were one, that the world might believe, that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God." The word of God is not the medium through which we believe, if it requires an interpretor.

But not intending to debate the question of the authority of

the Scriptures, we would impress the reader with the fact, that the movers and originators of the Reformation of the nineteenth century, have done more to call the attention of the world, from religious fables and speculations of men, than all others from the close of the revelation in the first century, to this day. Whether we receive any credit in this world on account of our pleadings for the literal word of God fairly translated, without note or comment, exposition or coloring, we need not be anxious; and still, we rejoice in the confidence that a powerful influence has been felt, particularly in the Protestant denominations of this century, solely from our labor. Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists, discourse in quite a different style respecting the place of the word of God, in religious teaching from what they did fifty years years ago. They are disposed to maintain, that very much of our spiritual light comes through the Bible, and that "the Bible is the only infallible creed." We have certainly done some good service in calling the attention of our contemporaries to the authority of the Holy Scriptures. To be sure, we have repudiated all theories in religion. If asked if we are Unitarians or Trinitarians, Calvinists or Armenians, we would promptly answer, if the views intended can be expressed in the words of the Scriptures, we will believe them. If, however, they cannot, we doubt whether they are of God, and we are quite sure, we do not believe them as parts of our creed. We are happy in the profession that, "a thus saith the Spirit," limits our faith, upon every subject whatever. Touching what are called the great leading items of our faith, we most cheerfully answer. The Bible teaches that, "To us, there is one God," the Father, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.

There is "One Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, who was rich in heaven, but for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." "There is one Spirit, which proceeds from the Father, and if any man have not the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. There is "*but one body*,"—family of God—or Church, and it is salvation from the dead, to become a member of this spiritual temple. With reference to the service of God, we all teach.

1. That Faith is the first requirement of the New Institution. "With the heart man believes in order to become righteous, and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation."

2. We teach that, believers are required, as the second obliga-

tion to repent of all their sins, not only to be sorry for our sins, but to "sorrow in a godly manner, which works repentance," that enables us to cease from sin and to amend our lives.

3. We maintain that penitent believers, are required in the Scriptures, to be baptized upon a confession of faith in Christ, in order to the remission of sins. Or as Paul expresses its meaning in the words, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3, 27.

4. We teach that, "such as have risen with Christ, in baptism, are to walk in newness of life," and if we persevere in well-doing, seeking for glory, honor and immortality, the reward of eternal life will be sure. With reference to names and worshippers, we have maintained that "Christian, is the highest style of man."

From the incipiency of the movement, we have believed that the people of God, or Christians, by virtue of their birthright and heirship, are not only competent to perform all divine service, but the Father requires it at our hands, upon the peril of eternal condemnation. We are frank to say that the great masses, claiming to be merely the disciples of Christ, or Christians, have held that the churches of the saints, or christians, in whatsoever circumstances they may be placed, are expected to sound out the word of the Lord to the nations of the earth. That in fact, all christian work, is performed by the churches. Christians have never believed that their Master's service is best performed, or really performed at all by human organizations, however, specious they may appear. Hence, we have never favored the dogma of official religious service, as taught by Romanists and Protestants. We have not believed an ordinance performed by a Pope, cardinal, bishop or any other functionary, is more valuable on account of the official grace, than if performed by an unofficial, such as Phillip, the Gospel preacher, or Jerusalem deacon. We have really maintained from the commencement of our religious career, that the members of Christs body are required as "lively stones," as "kings and priests" to place themselves under each other, according to the *qualifications* of different members of the body, and as members, they are required to perform all spiritual labor necessary for the salvation of our race. We deny not that, it has been intimated, there are members amongst us, who seem somewhat inclined to fraternize with the denominations, from which years ago we turned away. We have never desired to be unfriendly with any class of our fellow citizens; but this seeming retrograde aspect of affairs may have

arisen from a disposition in a few, to form associations like the surrounding parties, for the work of the Lord. This should surprise no one. Men, in all ages have been disposed to *experiment* in reference to plans, and no doubt individuals may be found in all countries, who become weary of the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. Still we hope there is no adequate ground to doubt the christian integirty, of the only people who have seemed to unitedly labor to bring all to see eye to eye, and to become one in the defence of the truth.

With all due defference to contempararies, we deem it but an act of simple justice to the brethren scattered abroad, to say that beyond all question, we have given evidence of marked advances in religious service. Our position in standing upon the Bible alone, for spiritual light, authority and service, has not only distinguished us from all parties, but it has created a deadly hostility, in all the sects against us. If the position is true, denominationalism is without authority from above, and must, sooner or later come to an end. In assuming also that the cause is the Savior's, that we are called neither to build up nor defend a sect, entitles us to at least, the respect of the thinking. It cannot be doubted, but the people known as "the Disciples of Christ," or Christians, in all lands, have studied the word of God, and really give evidence of a positive faith in Christ through his word.

We are also of the judgment that, in point of spiritual progress, with all our faults, fully admitted, our labors have not been in vain. Finally, it seems to us, a conclusion which cannot be doubted that, we will either continue to "grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, till the cause of our Master shall finally triumph, or the Lord will raise up a better people than ourselves, to carry forward the work, at present entrusted to our hands.

Bro. J. C. Lawson, of Pleasant Ridge congregation, Kansas, writes that success is attending the labors of the saints, Ten confessions have recently been taken; and the opposition, is quite changing its tone. In this warfare, we are to *conquor* a peace. God's institutions can form no alliances with the world.

SPIRITUAL LIGHT.—NO. 5.

In our investigations of spiritual influence, we think we cannot be mistaken that, the Scriptures fully authorize the following conclusions, viz:

1. That revelations from God in all ages and circumstances, were made through words.

2. All theories which assume that God's inspiration is from within, is the spontaneous out-growth of human nature, or *a priori*, are fabulous.

3. No ancient or modern theory, which asserts that revelations of God are through signs, tokens, impulses, mutterings or feelings, rises above the grossest Fetichism,or the fleshly impulses of human nature.

In the further prosecution of the subject, it may be well to call attention to the fact that, God in nature has employed specific agencies in accomplishing his wisest and grandest purposes. The physical universe, so far as we have been able to discover, is ruled by a single law—the power of gravity. The chemical elements in nature are few and simple—supposed not to excel sixty-two—and through the agency of these,God controls all natural phenomena. All the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, are subservient through these, and wondrous are the results in our eyes. These were employed in building the earth. They were, indeed, not only God's servants in forming the earth, but by them he has erected the hills, piled up mountains to the heavens, spread out the plains, caused the living fountains to gush forth, and through them, still supplies man and beast.

God makes no experiments, permits nothing new under the sun, but works on in his own matchless way, without wavering or the shadow of turning. But all the works and ways of God evince infinite wisdom and boundless goodness in the earth.

But shall we conclude that our heavenly Father, in accomplishing his designs in nature, uses simple elements—works by rule and makes no mistakes—while in things spiritual, all is confusion? Are there no data from which satisfactory conclusions can be drawn? Shall we admit that it is impossible to discover the whole truth in the spiritual kingdom, or entertain the thought for a moment that the children of God, though frail, can possibly be mistaken? If we are left to conjecture as to the manner in which the Father enlightens and rules spiritually, all is midnight darkness

to us. We know nothing satisfactorily, and our comforts in religion must necessarily be short lived and of doubtful tendency. Man is too noble a creature to be left in doubt as to his spiritual acquaintance with God.

When we shall have examined a little more closely some of the more popular theories regarding spiritual light, we may be the better prepared to appreciate the teachings of the Creator, through his chosen agency—"The words of eternal life."

The wide spread speculation of "universal inspiration," through the feelings, totally disqualifies the great masses of our contemporaries from receiving the truth as taught in the Holy Scriptures. The people generally, even the leaders—the preachers—have no confidence in the power of truth to save the soul. It has never occurred to them that God is in his agencies. Sensible people doubt not that the elements essential to their health and physical support, exist in the agents which God has so abundantly supplied in nature. They consume their bread in the confidence it is God's power to their support. The wise physician administers medicines which he has confidence to believe possess the power to accomplish the desired end; but in regard to the power of truth to illuminate the dark recesses of the human heart, and turn the world from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God, there seems to be but little confidence. For illustration, not many months since we attended a debate, during the progress of which we heard various prayers from distinguished preachers of several orthodox denominations, in each of which it was the studied effort to satisfy the hearers of the insufficiency of the word of God for spiritual light and power to direct. The burden of every supplication was for the Lord to "Send down his Good Spirit to apply the truths to the hearts of the people, and make it effectual in the conversion and sanctification of their souls." This accords with the almost universal teaching of denominations that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the mere "letter which kills," but it is the Spirit which quickens and gives life; whereas the Apostle calls the law of Moses the letter which killeth, in plain contrast with the Gospel which is called the Spirit that gives life. Paul says, "Who has made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." Again, he speaks of "The ministration of death written and engraven on stones, which though glorious, was to be done away," while "The ministration of the Spirit, as the ministration of right-

eousness, that exceeded in glory was to remain." 2nd Cor. iii: 7–9. The law was the letter, or ministration of death, intended to serve only to the coming of the promised seed, as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ; while the Gospel of Jesus Christ is styled "The ministration of the Spirit," that shall remain and conquer the nations. How, with such teachings of the inspired Paul before their eyes, men can have no confidence in the spiritual ministration, and call it a dead letter, without some additional quickening power, we cannot very well understand; so long, at least, as they profess to believe the Bible.

We may be told that "These are extreme views we are opposing, and that they are entertained by none except a few of the most rigid amongst the orthodox. We are sorry to say that we are satisfied many who deny that they are partisans possess no faith that God is in his appointments; that where the name of a king is, there is power; and in the appointment of God for the accomplishment of any purpose, he dwells and is always present. We profess not any philosophical understanding of the wonderful ways of God to man; but we state our conclusions with confidence, because we are certain they are fully authorized by the Lord's word. Whosoever prays for God to give efficacy to his word, or appointments, can have confidence he is in neither; and so long as the people generally labor under so fatal a delusion, they will occupy the position of the prophets of Baal, who were tantalized by the servant of God on account of their God's being asleep, or having gone on a journey; and, therefore, was to be excused for absence from his appointments. Our God is represented as ever present with us, and as in all that he cammands. He neither sleeps nor takes journeys to the neglect of his present agency in his every word and commandment. While we feel reluctaance at the necessity of admitting the existence in part of the same erroneous teaching amongst some of our companions in labor, we should be faithful to one another, and very candid in admitting wrongs in friends, quite as readily as in those who oppose us.

We recently noticed a series of essays in the *Christian Standard* under the signature of "Basil," of whom Bro. Errett, the editor, speaks in quite favorable terms, under the caption of "The office and work of the Holy Spirit," in which sentiments are set forth in quite defiant terms, that differ but little, if any, from the dark mysticism from which, we trust, we were converted when we became a Christian. "Basil" writes well, and evinces considerable

reading, good taste in his composition, and what is still better, an excellent spirit; but his teaching, from our religious standpoint, accords not with the Divine Records. In the first place, he seems to give the religious world but little credit for spiritual light. He says: "The doctrine of the spirit is far more prominent in the New Testament than it is in the religious teaching of any church or order at the present time." Again, "There was a recognized agency and efficiency of spirit in the New Testament churches, which seems to find no parallel in the present course of religious experience." This is a plain and full admission that all churches are destitute of that spiritual influence which existed in the primitive church. Was not his Advocate, or Spirit, to be sent for the purpose of remaining in the church against which "The gates of hell" were not to prevail? Has this church ceased to exist? Is there no spiritual body on earth? No "Family of God?" No temple of the "Holy Spirit?" "Basil" seems not to have found a spiritual church—such as existed in the days of the Apostles. But he seems not to rely at all upon revelations of the Spirit, for spiritual influence. He frequently urges thatt here is "A religious nature of man" which aspires to know what is right, what is true, what is best., and asserts that "These inquiries are but expressions of the universal longings for divine direction and assistance." We beg permission to suggest that there is no more authority for the idea of "a religious nature" which causes the world to aspire to a knowledge of things invisible, than there is for a nature which will lead in any other direction. This notion of a religious nature causing us to "feel after God" and long for spiritual aid, has never been manifested by any people whose hearts were not illuminated by wisdom from on high. There were not a few in the days of Paul who were "without hope and without God in the world." Who were, "As natural brute beasts," devoted to the flesh, and who aspired to things not divine. We hesitate not to say that this matter of revelations through a religious nature is the old dogma of speculatists, who assume the *a priori* fancy of a cause existing in every one, quite adequate to enlighten all that come into the world. Our author says, again that, "The truth when believed in and received, is developed and applied by the Spirit, so that it becomes a never failing supply for the soul, answering to all its needs." This "never failing supply," he explains in the suggestion, that "An internal spiritual apprehension of the truth, is better than any understanding obtnined

through the senses, or ordinaey intellectual powers." While we hope not to judge rashly our Brother's teaching, we deem it our duty to say, that the idea of the "Spirit's developing and applying the truth," seems to us to destroy all confidence in "the power of the Gospel to save the soul," and to render man both helpless and irresponsible. This is the Calvinistical speculation, with which our mind was quite bewildered in the days of our boyhood, and which we regard as destitute of the slightest sanction from the word of truth.

But the worst feature of our authors teaching seems to consist in the notion of a "marvellous existence of a spiritual law in the heart, superior to any and every acquisition through the senses, or understanding heart, which God has given to examine every theory and prove what is truth. The doctrine set forth, reminds us of the peculiarities of the gifted Theodore Parker, who said, "God still inspires men as much as ever," "that he is imminent in spirit as in space." "This doctrine relies not on scripture, as the last ground, but on the divine presence in the soul, the eternal word of God." He speaks also of direction by the "Religious sentiment," which to us is equivalent to Basils theory, of revelation through our "*religious nature*." But we wait further developments from our friend who seems inclined to theorise and will return to the main question to which we have invited our readers. The first is, we repeat, with reference to the manner in which God enlightens our race spiritually. We have attempted to show in various ways, that through nature—the external world—there is nothing spiritual received,and that human nature is not sufficient to develop spiritual light. We have certainly shown from the sacred oracles, that all our light from above, from God, and in regard to the spiritual world, or in reference to what is spiritual in man, has been revealed through the word of God. We have insisted that God employed words as signs of spiritual thoughts, that the last spiritual words were delivered about the close of the first century of the christian era, when "All" came to the unity of the faith, through a perfect revelation, and that since that period the light has been quite sufficient for all practical purposes, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work. We think we have also shown, that from the close of the first century to the present day, there has been no increase of spiritual light. If we are not greatly mistaken, we have proved, that the slightest evidence of new light on the subject of religion, would most certainly tend to destroy faith in Christ, and his religion, and all hope of a resurrection through him.

We have also intimated that the tendencies of the supposed new revelations of the present age, as in fact all the ages of the past, have been of a most demoralizing character, We very earnestly desire in our future investigations of spiritual light, to offer to christians, all the encouragement that the light and indwelling of "the Spirit which proceedeth from the Father," is calculated to afford. This labor will require the most careful study of various questions, which we hope will tend to improve in heart and life all who will give them attention. Still, we suggest that the field of spiritual light is wide, and there is ample room for the employment of the best talent of the people of God. If we differ, we should earnestly strive together, as brethren in a common cause, for the truth which makes us free.

SOME OF THE ENGLISH POETS.

[The following historical sketches, which we consider appropriate for the pages of the HISTORIAN, were read by Miss Magdalena Harsh at the Commencement of Hope Institute, June 6, 1872.—ED,]

IT is said that, "No art shows more exactly how the tide of genius ebbs and flows, than that of poetry." There are periods in which the fountain whence the stream should flow is dried up, and its music is no more heard. There is no voice singing in melodious numbers to rouse or soothe mankind. This was the case in the middle of the eighteenth century. Between Milton and Pope, the art of song had changed from an inspired message to a chime of words.

Milton, grand, harmonious and musical, was a man overflowing with thought and lofty meaning. He had so much to tell, one would think his manner of telling it would be indifferent to him, but it never was, on account of the inborn music of the man—that wonderful sense of melody in which he has never been surpassed. His subject was always of the highest importance and solemnity, and his voice rose in organ floods of grandeur and sweetness.

Dryden, who came after Milton, had no message to the world. He had no solemn truths to tell of time or eternity. He did not

"point to brighter worlds, or lead the way," and with him, style was more important than the subjects of which he treated. His verses flowed in a full stream of melody, but if they affected *his* generation, they never melt *us* to tears, or turn *our* thoughts heavenward. This phase of poetry attained its perfection in Pope. He brought no great themes to the sad or weary. The aching heart was not soothed by his pleasant words. The sorrowful of earth were not cheered by his easy flowing rhymes—the sharpness of their anguish was not alleviated. He did not, like Milton, overflow with great ideas of heaven or earth—did not give nobility to the mind of his period, or fill with pure thoughts those inclined to wander in the ways of sin. His graceful numbers danced on lightly, but his subjects were often trifling, and sometimes nauseous. It was impossible to do anything more perfect in combining words, and his school closed. It was necessary for a new melody to be heard, before the world could be roused from the slumber which had lulled its brain.

In the silence of the age, a man was being prepared for the work. He was without experience, or acquaintance with the world—a man of mournful life. In one point of view he was weak, helpless and miserable, in another, full of the sunshine of cheerful yet solemn thought, of a genial and universal sympathy which attracted the love of many, and the tender feeling of all. He was as timid as a woman, and sat in his little retreat, every now and then, looking out upon the world and making for it songs true, pure, life-like and melodious. COWPER—for it was he—loved a beautiful woman, poor as himself. Her father asked her how she would make a living. "I will wash all day, sir, and take a ride on the great dog in the evening." This poet shows how men fret out their little life—how God is faithful. He sees the earth with Heaven's own tender appreciation. He asks no aid from sentiment and romance, but trusts to simple nature. His eye becomes luminous, his voice expands, he rises to noble fullness and prophetic force of speech. Poetry has never produced utterances more deep, true and tender. His lines addressed to his "Mother's Picture" and "My Mary," are thought by some to be two of the most exquisite little poems in the language. He threw away the traditions of Dryden and Pope and caught the stream of poetry from the fountain at which it flowed brightest and most full. England fancied she had outlived the lofty numbers of blank verse, but found now that the old strain was her favorite.

She found that nature was as sweet as in the days of Milton, the English fields as fair, the rural sights and sounds as fresh and pleasant. This timid recluse drew the veil from her eyes, and threw open to her a world sweet, dewy and fragrant.

Cowper did not, like Pope, create a school, but seemed to act on the very air. It was like the warm ripple of the gulf stream, moving the atmosphere we breathe. The influence of Cowper on the great poet who followed, cannot be pointed out, but it is said, "Without Cowper, Wordsworth would not have been." The work of one rose out of that of the other. Cowper laid the foundation, another came and built upon it. Wordsworth did not study books. His mind was formed by other influences. He developed alone, like a tree fed by the dews of heaven. He was without father, without mother, in his own consciousness, like that mysterious priest, in the darkness of the patriarchal ages, to whom even the father of the faithful himself did homage.

Wordsworth was a poet of nature. The world breathes mysterious around him, something sweeter and more subtle than music, murmuring in his ears the very silence rustling as with the wings of the unseen. In his mountains, a great stillness is over all. Among them, among real crags, with nature breathing softly through all the wondrous quiet, he gives the reflections of his own mind, till glen and mountain seem but shadows of himself. There is sweet and solemn union between them and the man who reveals them. There is no passion, no excitement. Everything is calm as heaven where those great peaks stand up before God. He and his hills breathe a quiet over us as we listen.

Wordsworth had confidence in his own genius, and seated as it were on a throne, he waited for kings to bow to him, and they came, acknowledging his power. His life passed on full of peace and high contemplation—full of love, comfort and beauty. Two women, his wife and sister, to whom he was most devoted and tender, were his companions and worshippers. His home was of his own choosing, in the spot he loved best upon earth. In his calm retirement he wove those gossamer webs of poetry, glorious with the dew of his youth. His one great sorrow was the death of his young daughter Dora. He did not recover from it, but died soon after. She had brought so much brightness to his home, he could not exercise his usual philosophy when the sweet light grew dim and faded. Her fresh young spirit had so many hopes, so many sweet affections gushing forth with flower and sunlight, so many high and beauteous thoughts, wandering like

birds of Paradise free over earth and heaven, that he could not be reconciled to miss her from his side, and remember she was lying in the gloom and darkness of the grave. Soon he was laid by her, to rest till the ressurection morn. Oh ! life, life, great are thy sorrows to the strongest.

After this man of the mountains—this lover of dingle, dell and wildwood—comes Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a poet of more power than those we have mentioned—dwelling in the very atmosphere of poetry—poetry wild, strange and original, like nothing in heaven or earth. His strains thrilled the world with the consciousness of a new power, "a new light revealing the unseen." His mind and soul were uplifted to the magic hill-top, on which he chants his song, with his singing garments around him. It is as if an angel sang, yet not an angel, a wandering, wayward spirit, with deeper sympathies for earth and its anguish than for higher realms. The song comes forth to us chanted softly, with now and then a rising swell of inspiration, out of the undiscovered world between earth and heaven. It is the utterance of one who sees what we cannot see, and hears what we do not hear.

Coleridge seemed unsuited for the prose of every day life. At college he surpassed all. His conversational powers were unrivalled. He tried to be a soldier, but his tendency to fall off his horse, and his inability to learn the drill, prevented success. To hear him talk, the whole regiment was ready to serve him—black his boots, curry his horse, or any other drudgery that fell to his lot. He married, and nothing can be more sweet and tender than the outpourings of his love in poetry. Poverty, however, set its grip on the very commencement of his happiness. He had never thought of the necessity of having breakfast, dinner and supper every day, and they were often wanting. He rented a small cottage, and was very happy for awhile. Nothing can be more sweet than his poetic effusions to his wife. "Low was our pretty cot," our tallest rose peeped at the chamber window. We could hear at silent noon, and eve, and early morn, the sea's faint murmur. In the open air our myrtles bloomed, and across the porch thick jessamines twined. The little landscape round was sweet and woody, and refreshed the eye. There is no mistaking the reality and fervor, the truth and purity of the sweet domestic tale as long as it lasts; but, unable to provide for a family, he left, and led a wandering, troubled life. The floods of philosophy that poured

from him seemed to have no effect on his own life. The fascination he exercised over all who approached him, the power and beauty of his teaching. cannot be described. I have lately read his "Ancient Mariner"—so wild and strange. The storm, the mist, the snow, the flitting of the albatroses, the spectre ship against the sunset, the voice of the spirits, all heighten the wonder. At the end of the weird tale comes the little moral, as for a child, yet profound as the blue depths of heaven,

> "He prayeth best, who loveth best
> All things both great and small,
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made and loveth all."

He sinks from the heights of spiritual music, to the simplicity of nature. We are set down, as it were, out of the clouds, on the soft grass of the earth.

No English minstrel deserves a higher place. His poetry comes from his hands, a golden gossamer web of loveliest completeness, jeweled and shining all over with the diamonds of true genius. His sweet young daughter (beautiful and gifted as becomes the child of a poet) comes forward to hold the shield of love and reverence over her father's name, and all seemed willing to forget his faults, knowing his great suffering.

Shelley, twenty years younger than Coleridge, was born 1772. He was a man of no duties, no responsibilities. He knew nothing but to sing and be happy if he could. The account given of him, when he first appeared at Oxford, was this, "He was a slim lad, with brilliant eyes, voice like a peacock, and most wonderful ways." When he begun to write poetry, all was vague, shadowy and wistful. A writer speaking of him, says, "To us, Shelley is a wandering voice, wildly sweet, with powers of utterance unsurpassed. He has no message to the world. He fills the mind with no pure thoughts. He makes none happier or better. The most of his song is pure music—he has been called an embodied song. We glide along the stream of melody, without effort, without note of time or progress. "Flow on thou shining river," is the only sentiment of our admiration.

With all his strange and thick coming fancies, his bewildering sweetness of song, he seems a spirit of another sphere. The flowers he understands, and the clouds, but man he knows not, and has no power to comprehend. He could not bear the burdens and drudgery of life. His idea was, "The sun should always

shine, the soft winds blow, and the birds make music. There should be rich shades for all the streams and fragrant lillies. The calm flowing waves should land the mariner on flowery isles, or soft silvery strands." Deep woods breathing coolness and fragrance were as soothing to him as the touch of angels. The dreamy quiet healed his wounds, charming away all sense of pain.

I think no one who has read his "Address to a Skylark," can ever forget it—

"Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest,
Like a cloud of fire,
The blue deep thou wingest;
And singing still, dost soar,
And ever soaring singest.

Like a glow-worm golden,
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue,
Among the flowers and grass,
That screen it from the view.

What thou art, we know not,
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see.
As from thy presence rains a shower of melody."

Among the clouds Shelley is quite at home—knows all their ways and doings. He makes one give a pleasant account of itself—

"I bring fresh showers, for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams.
I bear light shade, for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken, the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one.
When rocked to rest, on their mother's breast,
As she dances in the sun.
I wield the flail of the dashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again, I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.
Over the hills, and the crags and the rills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever I dream over mountain and stream,
The spirit I love remains.
And I, all the while, bask in heaven's blue smile,
While some are dissolving in rains."

One cannot read his sweet flowing language without wonder, and without regret that his great powers were not devoted, in love, to those who sin and suffer, who need help to turn from forbidden paths to the pure and the good. But it is said that no one was ever made better, or more capable of performing the duties of life, by reading the poems of Shelley. We turn from him to Milton, toiling grandly to benefit his fellow beings, and seeking his happiness in the approbation of his own heart. We love to look at Wordsworth, wandering solitary among his mountains, and storing his mind with wisdom to make the world better. As we have said, "He loved the beautiful and the good." He persuaded men to leave the revelry of earth, to commune with nature and with Nature's God. He urged them to go forth to breathe the air of mountains, to sail on the bosom of quiet lakes. He tried to calm their beating hearts, to soothe their fevered blood, and to lead them to fountains that "go softly." His voice came forth quietly as a zephyr, but was not lost in the hum of the world. It mingled with the noisy strife, and subdued it to a sweeter, gentler murmur. It fell upon the heart of youth, and its passions grew calmer. It tempered the aspect of life to many an eager spirit. The tones were hopeful and serene. They were such as would be listened to in solitude, when the summer winds were blowing, and the presence of a flashing stream brought music and gladness to the hills and valleys. They were tones of melody, heard when bright young faces gathered round the winter hearth, and seemed like antique music linked to household words. Solemn and sweet, they filled the soul with earnest thought, and taught "To raise the heart and bend the knee." This was the mission of Wordsworth, and nobly he fulfilled it. Men learned that "There are periods when passionate poetry wearies, and light measures are full of discord. There are moments when the heart is calmed and softened, and it is a luxury to pause, and forget the strifes and sorrows of earth—when it is a relief to leave the crowd, to wander into solitude, and seek like tired children to repose the throbbing brow on the bosom of nature, and in her maternal smile to find rest and solace. Such moments redeem life from its monotony, and refresh the human heart with dew from the urns of peace.

INQUIRY.

A SISTER writing from Ky., says, "I have been asked, whether Adam died a spiritual or a physical death. My friend thinks it was a physical death, but, he was spared, because he offered a sacrifice acceptable to God." When you have leisure, will you give me your ideas on the subject?

I will say to my sister, Adam could not have died a spiritual death, for Paul says, "The first man is of the earth—earthy." An earthy, unspiritual being could not die a spiritual death. Adam and Eve were told they should die, in the day on which they ate the fruit. Was this fulfilled? What God says, comes to pass, as certain as he says it. We can learn the literal meaning of die—of death by the application of the words in Scripture. What does Paul mean, when he says, "I die daily?" Again, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We read in Revelation, the wicked "shall be turned into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death." What is death in this passage, but *suffering*—terrible suffering?

Man became a suffering—dying being, the day he ate the fruit, "You shall become dying—mortal, was the decree, and he became a mortal, suffering being, on that day. He ceases to die here, when soul and body separate. That is the end of his dying, if he loves and obeys his Savior. You and I have been suffering all our lives. and will continue, like Paul, to die—to suffer daily, until our spirits leave our dying bodies. If we have been earnest christians, "This *mortal* will put on immortality, at the Resurrection, and we will die—will suffer no more. That this may be our happy lot is the prayer of your sister. C. F.

Where is Adam's sacrifice spoken of in the Bible?

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT.

WHILST we do not regard it wise or proper to publish notices, which have reached our office with rference to "The Religious Historian," we consider it altogether becoming to say to the brethren, that we are most thankful to a kind Father in Heaven, that we are spared to perform some little service, which we hope is well pleasing to Him. We humbly trust, that to the end of our brief journey, it will be our only ambition to labor for the advancement of the cause of the blessed Savior.

DELAY IN ISSUING THE HISTORIAN.

We suggest to our readers that various causes, which we need not specify, have contributed to retard the publication of our paper; but we doubt not that, we shall be able to furnish the twelve numbers before the close of the year. As we intend not the Historian to occupy the place of a newspaper, the delays that have occurred can certainly be of no great consequence to any one. In reference to the future, it will be our earnest effort to make the necessary gain each month to close the volume at the proper time.

"HASTEN LEISURELY."

Brethren, for whom we have respect, are urging us "to hurry on to the history of the church, and especially, to the perpetuity of the church;" but, as our caption suggests, these are matters which require cautious approaches, and we respectfully suggest that we hope to proceed quite as expeditiously as the character of the labor and the condition of religious society will justify. The Savior said to his disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now." John xvi: 12. We are endeavoring by strict examination of our purposes, to ascertain if we are fully prepared to speak the whole truth, without the least human policy, in our labors; and we are also striving earnestly to satisfy our own mind that the disciples of Christ of the nineteenth century, are qualified to hear the Spirit's teaching in reference to the details of the body of Christ. Think you, brethren, that we are ready to plead the authority of so simple an organization as "The Church at Jerusalem?" It is our purpose, in the first place, to give the scriptural statement of the Church of God; and should we be successful in this most important department of our labor, the "perpetuity" of the body, we shall consider very plain service. We promise to proceed cautiously, and yet with as much speed as the circumstances will authorize. We trust our course will be satisfactory to the most anxious of the friends of truth.

THE

RELIGIOUS HISTORIAN,

FOR 1872.

In the belief that there is a great and fruitful field of Christian labor, not fully occupied, we have established THE RELIGIOUS HISTORIAN, for the purpose of re-examining *the Elementary Principles of the Christian Institution*, and of giving our energies to *Church History*, as revealed in the Bible, found in the world's history and set forth in Denominational records. All matters of a practical character, connected with the Church of Christ, shall have due attention, and Education, especially, will come under revision.

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